

2015 Report of Region 8 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
to Synod Assemblies

According to the ELCA Constitution, the region's primary mission is to connect, resource, support and network those serving in leadership in our synods and congregations. The following examples represent aspects of that work of the Region 8:

Candidacy and Assignment of First Call Candidates is, perhaps, the primary area of responsibility in my portfolio.

- In many respects I serve as adjunct staff to each Region 8 synod; in addition to my service at every synod's candidacy committee meeting, I am the 'go to' person for all things candidacy. This work regularly includes arranging Theological Review Panels and Competency Assessment Panels (as well as the follow-up report writing) and responding to the particular questions that often stymie synod staff people.
- Each year we hold at least one Region-wide candidacy gathering for each synod's candidacy staff and committee chair person; also invited are any number of colleagues in ministry from across the region (e.g., Directors for Evangelical Mission). Throughout 2015 we reviewed DRAFT Candidacy Manual material and utilized the skills of several Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (LTSG) colleagues to discuss the implications for the candidacy due to the changes in the LTSG Masters of Divinity degree options, the development of a partnered Distributive Learning program between Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia/LTSG, the piloting of electronic student portfolios, and ongoing work in the development of a competency based MDiv program.

First Call Theological Education is a natural extension of candidacy's preparation of rostered leaders and first call assignment's work to match candidates' gifts with congregations' missional needs.

- Region 8 partners find continuing value in cooperative efforts in some key aspects of the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) program. Primarily this means the planning and implementing of a Region 8 FCTE Annual Conference; the office works with a Region-wide advisory council in planning.
- Due to the changes in both theological education and candidacy, Region 8 partners took the opportunity to review and restructure our approach to the annual FCTE Conference; that structure debuted in the November 2014 Conference. The program components were identified by the Region's bishops and the structure developed as a result of the collaboration between the bishops and the FCTE advisory council. Due to the success of the new structure in 2014, for the November 2015 conference we implemented the full structure of this plan (which includes three learning tracks, with nine segments).
- In addition to the conference, each synod also provides more contextual opportunities.

Support of newly called synod staff is yet another aspect of my service.

- Bishop Riegel began service on September 1, 2015, in the WV/WMD Synod and I spend time assisting with his orientation for service and supporting the work of the Synod's emerging staff.

Global Gathering efforts is yet another facet of my service in Region 8.

- We Are Church Together – Region 8 Networks for Mission Gathering is scheduled for October 6-8, 2016; this effort (in collaboration with Chicago-based staff) brings together six churchwide networks (Global Mission/Companion Synods, Mission Interpreters, Synod/Congregation Communicators, World Hunger/Malaria, Disaster Response, and Stewardship) and two Region-based networks (youth/young adults and green initiatives).

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Gable, Diaconal Minister, D. Ed. (Penn State)

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